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LOOKING GLASS

FOR

YOUTH and AGE;

Or, A Sure Guide

To LIFE and GLORY:

Set forth in an heavenly Dialogue between a godly Gentleman and his only Daughter, a Child of ten years of Age.

Publiſh'd for the good of ENGLAND, by the conſent of the Bp. of L—n.

Train up a Child in the Way he ſhould go; and when he is old he will not depart from it. Prov. xiii 6.



A Looking-Glass for Children.

MR. John Nicholson, Gent. late of the Parish of St Brides London, married a virtuous young gentlewoman from Oxfordshire with whom he had a fortune of 5000*l*. they lived together the space of 15 years, loving and beloved by all that knew them setting the brightest example of piety and charity before their neighbours, devoting the third part of their time to the service of God, and a like moiety of their substance for their relief of the poor and needy for he took Joshua's resolution, let other gentlemen fool away their precious time as they list in sport, and plays, as for me and my house we will serve the Lord, J. XXvi. 15. Thus they lived together a kind of heavenly life, free from any contention, but who should outdo the other, in godly deeds, till it pleased the lord to take this dear partner to himself, leaving one daughter of ten years old to inherit both her mothers beauty and virtue. The loss of so loving and tender a wife, tenderly affected him, and dreading never to have her equal, he resolved not to make a second choice, for two reasons i. e. not to place a mother in law over his child; and fearing he should get one who would hinder his charity and devotion. the next day after the death of his wife, finding his daughter bitterly weeping for her mother, he came to her and said,

Father, Dear Child, cease these tears you provoke the Lord to anger for grieving and repining at his good pleasure and providence. Your mother is only gone before, and we in a little time must follow her in the same way.

Daughter, Honoured Sir, what child can forbear to weep to lose so dear so good and tender a mother?

F. My dear child, we must always resign our will to the will of our heavenly father, who knows what is best for us, she is happy beyond thought: 'Tis sinful to grieve for those whom God takes to himself.

D.



D. But gracious Sir, God, I hope, will pity human weakness: Our blessed Saviour himself did mourn for his friend Lazarus; John ix. A mother is nearer and dearer than any friend to a child,

F. True, dear Child: our Saviour shewed therein that he was a man as well as God: and that we should not be like stocks and stones insensible for the loss of friends: but immoderate sorrow St. Paul condemns as in the office of the dead, and 1 Cor, xv. &c. because we should rest assured that our friend departed is in joy and bliss: and not despair as a man without hope.

D. Sir I ask pardon of God and you, and if I am too extreme in lamenting my mother's death, for the future I will endeavour to follow her blest example, and then I don't fear but I shall meet her with joy in the regions of light, never to part again.

F. Now dear child you rejoice my heart to hear those heavenly expressions from your gracious lips, but tell me my dear dost thou think that the souls of friends departed know one another in Heaven?

D. Yes Sir, I believe they will, for knowledge will be perfected and enlarged: And if wicked Dives in hell could know Abraham and Lazarus in heaven, surely the glorified Saints will know each other better:

F. Dear Child this is my opinion, as many of the ancient fathers and modern divines, tho' others will not have it so, But tell me child? Dost thou think thy mother knows of thy sorrow for her departure, or no?

D. No Sir, I believe they that are glorified know one another, but nothing of what is done on earth: which interrupts their joy, or discomposes their rest, Abraham is ignorant of us, and Isaac knows us not.

F. Dear Child, I find, your pious mother has spent her time in vain in instructing you, God give grace to improve that knowledge. Now tell me, do you think of the unity of the blessed trinity?

D. Sir I believe that Father, Son and Holy Ghost one Glorious God. Infinite, wise, good, just, powerful.

assist in all places, and the like : the Creator and Preserver of us and all things.

F. Then dear child wilt not thou fear to offend this great good God. that made and preserved thee and will make thee happy to eternity, if thou obeyest his commands.

D. Yes Sir, by his grace and assistance I'll conform my words, thoughts and actions to his laws : and that I bro' love rather than fear, neither heaven nor hell (as I am sure there are both) I would be godly of choice.

F. Child, wilt thou place thy affections on the follies and vanities of this life, as wordlings do.

D. No Sir, but pass a short time of my sojourning here as Pilgrim's do : and long to be with Christ, and be dissolved which is better.

F. Wilt thou be proud of any earthly enjoyment, as, wit, beauty, and the like.

D. No Sir for those are but lent me, not my own: and God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Jam. iv. 6.

F. Wilt thou murmur or repine at Gods providence, if he should visit thee with sickness, poverty, afflictions or misfortunes ?

D. No Sir, I am his own, and he may dispose of me as he pleases : the Potter has power over the clay, and the Lord, like a tender father, chastises his dearest children often for their own good.

F. Wilt thou fret when things go contrary and mourn immoderately about the affairs of this life.

D. No Sir, but after an honest endeavour cast my care upon God, for he careth for me : for I know an hair of my head, nor even a sparrow, can fall to the ground without his permission.

F. Furthur, wilt thou go to church as many others do for fashion sake, or chat and sleep when there.

D. No Sir I will reverence his house ; and regard his presence, for Eutychus was taken up dead for sleeping at his devotions. Acts xx. 9.

And several divine and moral judgments we have to caution us against sleeping at divine service, for Example, an ancient woman near this town, and in the said county was reduced to want and poverty, put into an alms house, not being used to such lodgings, and the black vermin called Fleas, she could not sleep six hours in six days, but her usual saying was thus : I will go to church on the Lord's day, there I can take a precious nap, but it proved to be a cursed one, for she was tempted by the devil, for want of that true armour to a christian. call'd watch and pray, that she became hateful malicious and spiteful, and so turn'd witch, and did abundance of mischief to the Inhabitants whereto she belonged.

F. Wilt thou accustom thyself to Lying as many wicked Children do.

D. No Sir : For I know no lyar shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven : and for every word we speak we shall give account at the day of judgment, Rev. xx 18.

F. Further dear Child Swearing is a most odious and scandalous Practice, neither Credit, Profit, Pleasure are Temptations to it, yet much in Fashion ; tell me wilt thou ever addit thyself to it ?

D. Sir God forbid : by reason of oaths the land mourns, as the Prophet complains, Our Sa-iour and St. James exhort us earnestly from it : And indeed it is a base unmanly custom. Mat. v 25. Jam. v, 12.

F. Dear Child wilt thou take delight to vex grieve disobey, revile or curse thy parents as many graceless ungrateful children do, after all their care and pains for them ?

D. No Sir, that child was condemn'd by law that did so : they were to stone them to death, and they deserved it. Many severe judgments both in this life and the next, pursue those that are guilty of it.

F. Dear child, wicked children and young people have a barbarous custom to mock ancient people, and laugh at the infirmity of their neighbours, such as are deformed or disordered in body or mind ; I hope you'll

never do so.

D. No: by God's assistance I will rather praise him that I am not so myself, 'twas a fearful judgment the Lord sent unto the 42 children that mock'd and scoffed the Prophet Elisha. Kings, ii. 23 24.

F. Dear Child wilt thou spend thy precious time in fruitless visits and gossiping tales, whereby thy neighbours reputation and credit may be injured and lessened.

D. No Sir, for backbiters and slanderers are excluded the Kingdom of heaven.

F. Dear child wilt thou dream of long life and old age and spend thy youth and prime in the drudgery of Satan as others do, and think at last that a few cold prayers will bring thee to heaven.

D. No Sir, I will remember my creator in the days of my youth, and work my salvation with fear and trembling, and live in continual expectations of my change, not knowing what may happen.

F. Dear child wilt thou covet to hoard up riches for thyself by unlawful means, and shut up thy bowels of compassion from those that are in want and distress and grasp the world till thou can't hold it no longer; and then think it sufficient to leave a few legacies to the poor and needy.

D. No Sir: But if God should lend me wealth, I wou'd reckon myself his reward, and lay it out to the best advantage, and relief of my poor fellow creatures; for there will be a dreadful account to give for those that don't improve their talents.

F. My dear child, wilt thou be good in a particular manner to the widow and fatherless, and harbour those that are strangers and destitute.

D. Yes Sir, I know there are particular blessings promised those that do it; and some (as St. Paul observes) have entertained angels unawares.

F. Dear child, wilt thou frequently think of thine own mortality, when thou see'st others die or buried: and that neither youth or strength, wisdom wealth blood

or beauty, can secure thee from the grave, where we are all hastening.

D. Yes Sir, for I perceive the young die as well as the old. We have no lease of our lives, but will drop to eternity; and therefore I will learn to die daily, and wean myself from the world.

F. Thus far my child, thou hast answer'd me in the general duties of a christian very well; but as I know not how soon it may please God to take me from you, as well as your mother, let me advise you a little in the future management of your life, in the several stations it may please the Lord to place you in.

D. Dear Sir, I will gladly bear, and readily obey your directions, for I know 'tis my duty and interest so to do.

F. My child, if it please God thou should'st grow up to woman's estate, thou wilt have some admirer no doubt, some for thy person, but more for thy portion. A sincere friend and a good husband are hard to find.

D. Sir you proved both to my dear mother, I trust in the Lord he has the same blessing in store for me; should it be my lot to alter my condition.

F. Dear child I hope so, yet if you shou'd meet with a froward husband, let thy gentleness and submission soften and mollifie him.

D. I believe no man so barbarous and wicked, but a loving and obedient wife may go a great way to better and reform him. My endeavours shall not be wanting.

F. Dear child in the next place, if God should bless you with children, don't set thy heart upon them too much, lest thou provoke a jealous God to remove those blessed objects from you: for looking more on the gift than the giver; for they are certain cares but uncertain comforts.

D. Indeed Sir, if God lends me any of these pledges of his love, I shou'd rejoice to nurse them for him.

F. Yes my dear, whenever he gives thee a child, gine thou hear'st him call from heaven (as the daughter did to the mother of Moses)

(8)
nurse him up for me. Then do as Hannah the mother
of Samuel did devore and give him to the Lord as freely
as he gave it to you.

D. Sir, if it please God to bless my circumstances so as
to have any children or servants; I hope my example and in-
struction will bring to God without brawling or blows;
for few are better by it, if they have any Grace at all.

F. Very true dear child; Yet if they prove obsti-
nate, gently reprove them, encourage them in religious
duties, for God will require their souls at thine hands,
while they are under thy care: be not rigorous to thy
servants knowing you have a master in heaven,
who will call thee to an account for the wrongs thou
doest them.

D. Dear Sir, what is the meaning that the greatest di-
vines and scholars give but a slender account of the joys of
Heaven or the torments of hell.

F. Dear child because spiritual and eternal things
are above the reach of our shallow capacity, no learning
can comprehend those things fully in this life; we know
no more of the deep matters than a child born under
ground in a dark cave would know of this world but
as dungeon to heaven.

D. Sir, St. Paul says the eye hath not seen nor the
ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to
conceive the glory, joy, delight and pleasures, that are
prepar'd in Heaven for them that love and fear God.

Her prayer when she goes into the Church.

Blessed be thy name O Lord for giving me this op-
portunity of publick worship in thy house O let
the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be now and always acceptable in thy sight my God my
strength and redeemer.

Gracious God grant that I may not be a hearer but
a doer of thy word; and let the doctrine delivered
in my heart take root and bring forth fruit fit
to be offered to thee may tend to the glory and salvation
of thy Church for Jesus Christ his Sake, Amen.

